

Minutes of the Council of the City of Easton, Pa.

November 24, 2015

Easton, Pa
Tuesday
November 24, 2015
6:25 p.m.

City Council met in stated session at the above date and time, in Council Chambers, located on the third floor of City Hall, 123 S. 3rd Street, Easton Pa., to consider any business that may lawfully be brought before the body.

The invocation was given by Mayor Panto followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Panto (5)

Absent: Brown, Mauro (Work commitment), (2)

Also in attendance were Thomas A. Hess, City Clerk, William Murphy, City Solicitor, Joel Scheer, Assistant City Solicitor and Glenn Steckman, City Administrator. There were fourteen other persons present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Dr. Ruggles and Dr. Warner, the Agenda was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Panto (5)

Nays: None (0)

ACTION ON MINUTES

On motion of Dr. Warner and Mrs. Vulcano the November 10, 2015 Council Meeting minutes, as submitted, were approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Panto (5)

Nays: None (0)

RESOLUTION

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution recognizing the death of Joseph J. Ross a former firefighter.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mr. Edinger:

178-2015

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The above Resolution was adopted on motion of Mr. Edinger and Dr. Warner by the following vote:

Yeas: Warner, Vulcano, Ruggles, Edinger, Panto (5)
Nays: None (0)

Mayor Panto spoke regarding Mr. Ross' dedication to the City and the Fire Department.

The City Clerk was directed to send the Resolution to the Ross family.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Agenda Items Only

There were no comments from the audience.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion of Dr. Warner and Dr. Ruggles the following items were adopted by the following vote:

Resolutions 179, 180, 181, 182-2015, which approved Contracts with Main Pool and Chemical Co., Neo Solutions Inc., Polydyne Inc. and PVS Chemical Solutions for the purchase of chemicals for the Water Treatment Plant.

Resolutions 183, 184, 185, 186, 187 and 188-2015, which approved Certificates of Appropriateness for 42 N. 3rd, 123 S. 3rd, 122 N. 4th, 22 N. 6th, 140 Northampton and 140A Northampton Street.

Resolutions 189, 190-2015, which authorized the opening of two interest bearing checking accounts with Merchants Bank of Bangor for the online payment of utility bills and real estate taxes.

Yeas: Panto, Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner (5)
Nays: None (0)

REPORTS RECEIVED BY COUNCIL

There were no reports received by Council.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Mr. Brown, Chairman of the Finance Committee, was absent.

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Mrs. Vulcano, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, reported that the West Ward Neighborhood Partnership Steering Committee will meet on Monday, December 7, 2015 at 4:30 at Easton Hospital and reported that a West Ward Neighborhood Partnership Economic Development Business Roundtable meeting had been canceled and will be rescheduled for sometime in January.

Dr. Warner, Chairman of the Planning Committee, reported that the Rental Licensing Task Force met in Council Chambers, on Tuesday, November 17, 2015 at 6:30 p.m., a meeting with the Consultants will be held next week, and after that she said that she would be preparing a final report for Council.

Ms. Mauro, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, was absent due to work commitments.

Dr. Ruggles, Chairman of the Public Works Committee, reported that the National Lutheran Bishop would attend St. John's Lutheran Church's 275th Anniversary on December 6, 2015 at 10:30 A.M., and invited everyone to attend.

Mr. Edinger, Chairman of the Administration Committee, spoke regarding legislation that he would have for later in the meeting regarding amending sections contained in Chapter 45, Departments of the City's Codes.

Mr. Murphy, City Solicitor reported that before the meeting Council has met, in Executive Session, and had discussed the following litigations; PA Media vs. the City of Easton and Dieter Bros. vs. the City of Easton.

Mayor Panto gave an update on State legislation regarding landlords, the sunshine law, and spoke regarding the Landlord training being held the week of November 30th. He also reported that he, along with City Staff members, will be traveling to Williamsport to speak with them concerning their landlord program, to view their City Ordinances concerning this matter, and invited any Councilperson to accompany them. He reported that the Peace Candle lighting will be held on Saturday, November 28th at 6:30 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was received by Council:

- (a) The Miracle League of Northampton County, letter requesting financial support.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

Mayor Panto asked Mr. Steckman, City Administrator, to furnish Council with a Budget update, which he gave.

Mayor Panto thanked all of Council members for their work on the proposed 2016 budget.

NEW BUSINESS

Bill 53, Providing Revenues and Appropriating Specific Sums to be required for the City Budgets during the Fiscal Year 2016, was introduced by Mrs. Vulcano and ordered processed for adoption.

On motion of Dr. Ruggles and Mrs. Vulcano Bill 53 was amended, by the following vote, to eliminate the word “periodically” and replace it with the word “quarterly” in Section 2 of the Bill.

Yeas: Edinger, Panto, Warner, Vulcano, Ruggles (5)

Nays: None

This Bill would approve the proposed 2016 City Budgets.

Bill 54, Fixing the Tax Rate for all City Purposes for the Year 2016 was introduced by Mrs. Vulcano and ordered processed for adoption.

Mayor Panto spoke regarding the portion of the Millage regarding Real Estate Taxes.

This Bill would fix the Tax Rate at 24.95 Mills.

Bill 55, Amending Sections 45-4, Director of Community and Economic Development, and 45-6, Department of Planning and Zoning, of Chapter 45, Departments of the Code of the City of Easton, Pa., was introduced by Mr. Edinger and ordered processed for adoption.

This Bill would amend the above sections by eliminating the words “and as the Executive Director of the Redevelopment Authority” in section 45-4, and by adding the words “and as the Executive Director of the Redevelopment Authority” in Section 45-6 A.

The next item on the Agenda was a proposed Resolution which would approve a Letter of Proposed Financial Terms for the City of Easton Police Station at 30-56 North Fourth Street.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mayor Panto:

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On motion of Mayor Panto and Dr. Ruggles the above Resolution was amended by changing the words “Letter of Proposed Financial Terms” to “Letter of Intent” by the following vote:

Yeas: Vulcano, Ruggles, Edinger, Panto, Warner (5)

Nays: None (0)

Mayor Panto asked Police Chief, Carl Scalzo, to address Council on questions that had been raised regarding the proposed New Police Station.

Mayor Panto asked the Chief if the letter of intent contained everything that he wished it to include.

Chief Scalzo said that it did. He said that he had worked with the architect to try to come up with a preliminary design. As far as what they would need for a police facility it has everything as far as a functional standpoint. He said that it has an elevator.

The Mayor said that a question had arisen, that since this was a letter of intent, the developer took it by construction sequences so one of the sequences said that the elevator shaft will use CMU block.

The Chief said that he was correct.

The Mayor said that they want CMU block used in the elevator, so that is delineated. He said that it spoke about the steel, that would be used to hold up the elevator platform, but it did not speak about an elevator car, so the confusion was that we were getting the shaft but not the car.

Chief Scalzo said that everything that they discussed, included everything that was possibly needed, the equipment, the facility, and operationally. He said that there was nothing left out. He said that what they detailed in the plans and how specific they got would be a question for the builders.

Dr. Ruggles said that when the City purchases the building it must have a Certificate of Occupancy, and had to go through the City’s inspection and that would guarantee that there would be an elevator in place and asked if he was correct.

Peter Reinke, a representative of ALT Realty, said that he was correct.

Mayo Panto said that fencing was included to be placed around the perimeter for the protection of the Police Officers, but that it did not include any type of overhang for weather protection for the Police vehicles at this point.

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Mayor Panto asked if ALT Realty was willing to entertain a change order if the City wanted them to do the overhang or the City could do it themselves.

Mr. Rinke said that he was correct.

Mayor Panto said that ALT Realty agreed to do the fencing included in the price, but not the overhang. He said that the next step would be to go for formal plan specifications, and that the City would hire an architect to review ALT's drawings to keep everything right, and then at the end of the term when it is completely built and ready for a Certificate of Occupancy closing would be held and the City would purchase the property and building for \$7,244,000 and any change orders in between, caused by ALT would be financially covered by ATL.

Peter Melan, 500 Reeder Street, an elected 2016 Council member, asked if it has been confirmed regarding the number of firing lanes for weapons training.

Chief Scalzo said that the conversation that they had was that on the plans there are three lanes, and that the request was for four. He said that the problem was depending on the firing range and the actual system that is put in place, the actual width of those lanes must be determined. He said that the number cannot be determined until the exact widths of the firing lanes are determined. He said that the architects believed that four can go in the room but that must be determined later.

Mr. Melan asked about plans for the building that showed four, and asked if the plans had been changed from the plans that he received.

Mr. Steckman said that he gave Mr. Melan the plans that he had at the time of Mr. Melan's request.

Mayor Panto said that there were three lanes with the potential for four lanes and the City would verify that once the actual width was known and that they could see how many lanes could fit.

Chief Scalzo said that he believed that four could fit, but that would be known at a later time.

Mayor Panto asked if three was sufficient for firearms qualifications.

Chief Scalzo said that three would work but four would be better for scheduling for qualifications.

On motion of Mayor Panto and Mrs. Vulcano, the above amended Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

Yeas: Warner, Panto, Edinger, Ruggles, Vulcano (5)

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Nays: None (0)

PUBLIC COMMENT
(On any item)

There were no remarks from the audience.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m., on motion of Dr. Warner and Dr. Ruggles by the following vote:

Yeas: Ruggles, Vulcano, Warner, Panto, Edinger (5)

Nays: None (0)

Thomas A. Hess
City Clerk